

Girl Scouts. It was while she was a Girl Scout at the age of 12 that she became involved in activities with the local Sunshine Camp for the Blind. From there she began teaching songs to the blind, piano to younger children, and became a summer camp counselor and taught horseback riding lessons.

Martha married right out of college, and she and her husband recently celebrated their 44th wedding anniversary. They have two married children and three grandchildren. Moving to Georgia in 1975, as the children grew, she became so very involved in our community.

□ 1915

She has been involved with the Athens Area Association for Retarded Citizens, the Oconee Lions Club, Athens Evening Kiwanis Club, Oconee Optimist Club, the Oconee Pilot Club, and was a Special Olympics coach for over 12 years.

She has served on the board of directors for Sandy Creek Nature Center, First Night Athens, and Project R.E.A.C.H. She has also served Oconee County on the Citizens Advisory Committee on Cultural and Recreational Affairs.

Along with her fine husband, Peter, they have been major benefactors for numerous organizations, projects, and community groups such as the Athens Symphony and the Oconee County Public Library.

In 2003, the Oconee Rotary Club awarded Martha with the Jean Harris Award, given each year to a non-Rotarian woman in recognition of significant contributions given to the community over and above the call of duty.

Although these accomplishments and involvements are numerous and impressive, perhaps the most important contribution was the founding of Extra Special People, known as ESP. Martha Wyllie has put her energy, her love, and her financial resources into this program since its founding in 1986. For over 18 years, ESP has been providing a summer camp for youth and young adults ages 5 to 17 with different abilities. ESP camp provides a normal camping atmosphere for these young people.

Martha and her staff realize that these children wish to participate in the normal experiences of growing, and the ESP philosophy allows them to take part in regular camping activities while still meeting their individual needs.

Ms. Martha Wyllie, a tireless advocate who is the true definition of a good public servant, spends most of her waking hours helping everyone she touches to understand and to lend a hand to these very extra special people; and, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to share this woman with our colleagues.

#### THOSE WHO HAVE BORNE THE BATTLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Under a pre-

vious order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, 2 days ago the United States military announced that 1,000 military personnel have been killed in Iraq. For every American this is a time to contemplate the totality of the sacrifice of these brave Americans.

I recently returned from my second visit to our forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. I was awed by the courage, determination, and dedication of our troops who are fighting a brutal enemy thousands of miles from home.

Our soldiers, Marines, sailors, airmen, and coast guard are doing their job magnificently; but as we continue to battle a stubborn and pernicious insurgency in Iraq, Congress must take stock of the needs of our troops in battle and the challenges they will face when they come home.

We owe it to the more than 1,000 Americans who have died in Iraq and to their comrades serving there still to ensure that we put Iraq on the road to democracy and that we assist the Iraqi Government in building the security forces, army and police, that it needs to defend itself.

Since I was first in Iraq, the political transition has made important strides, but the security situation has worsened considerably; and our troops are shouldering an incredible load for the rest of us.

A year ago, the insurgency appeared confined to a few hundred Baathists, Saddam Fedeyeen, a small contingent of foreign fighters, and criminals released by Hussein before the war. Regrettably, the insurgency has spread, fueled by a much more substantial influx of foreign fighters and made more complex by Shiite uprisings in what had been more tranquil parts of the country.

The insurgents have embraced the tactics of foreign fighters. Suicide bombings and kidnappings have become much more sophisticated. Improvised explosive devices, IEDs, which take a daily toll on our troops, used to be easily visible to American personnel as they drove through the country. Now, they are buried, with only a slender wire of an antenna protruding above the ground and detonated remotely. Clearly our forces face a determined foe.

There is no question that the burden of this war has fallen exclusively on the shoulders of our men and women in uniform. While the military may always bear a disproportionate share of the burden in wartime, it is especially acute now. Even as our Guard and Reserve are constantly being called up and our active duty forces are stretched thin, the general population has been asked to make no sacrifice for a war effort that we are financing through debt.

Our troops are paying doubly for this war, first on the battlefield and then in the form of crushing deficits that have fundamentally weakened our economy.

Some only barely out of their teens, our troops will be paying for this war for the rest of their lives, even if they return home uninjured. They will pay for it in the form of higher mortgages on their first home, on credit card debt, and in taxes to repay the national debt.

Even as we speak, the families of our troops are struggling, losing jobs, businesses and piling up debt. I met a young Marine from my district in Pasadena who had been serving in Iraq since February and was due to return in the fall, return home. He had just learned that his wife had been called up and that she will be deployed to Iraq in the fall. Their planes may literally pass each other in the night.

We must not forget the nearly 7,000 Americans who have been wounded, more than 1,000 in the last month alone. Many of these wounds are grievous and many others might have been prevented had our troops been better equipped from the start of the war. Our troops now have the body armor they need and are driving armored Humvees, but they should never have gone into battle without these life-saving protections.

In an American military hospital in Baghdad, I spoke with several Marines hit with IEDs. Two Marines, who lay side by side in adjoining hospital beds, were riding in the same armored Humvee when they were struck. While these two Marines had shrapnel embedded in their legs and faces, a third Marine in the same Humvee was lucky and walked away unharmed. A fourth Marine they told me had not been so lucky. He died on the operating table the night before.

These young men and women and nearly 7,000 other wounded are returning to a Congress that seems to have forgotten Abraham Lincoln's admonition "to care for him who has borne the battle." We provide insufficient medical care for our veterans, and VA centers around the country are closing their doors, even as they are needed more than ever.

In our towns, cities and counties, thousands of individual Americans have pitched in to help our returning soldiers, but our Federal Government has lagged far behind. Until recently, our wounded were charged for the food they ate while recovering at Walter Reed Army Hospital.

I realize that time is short in this Congress, but I hope when we consider the VA-HUD appropriations bill later this month and in our work on defense and veterans issues in the 109th Congress that we consider the extraordinary price that we as a Nation have asked of the men and women of our Armed Forces and that we match our words with deeds.

#### INCREASE IN THE MONTHLY MEDICARE PART B PREMIUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KING of Iowa). Under a previous order

of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I would like to speak on the issue of the 17 percent increase in the Medicare monthly premium for the part B of Medicare. This is an increase of \$11.60 on the monthly part B premium, which places it from \$66.60 up to \$78.20 a month.

The reason, Mr. Speaker, this was necessary is under a formula, by law, the part B premium has to cover at least 25 percent of the cost of medical providers, and in fact, with medical inflation and with an increase in reimbursement to medical providers that we gave last year in the Medicare Modernization Act, this increase in premium was necessary. It reflects medical inflation; and more importantly, it reflects that slight provider increase that was included in the act.

There is no question that this increase is significant for some beneficiaries. Mr. Speaker, I have done probably 60 town halls in my district in the 18 or 20 months I have been in Congress; and, yes, when I go into my district, people will complain about the cost of the prescription drugs and point out to me the difficulties they have in meeting the obligation of paying for their prescriptions. But what I heard at virtually every town hall, without exception, was seniors who had turned 65 and asked me, how come when I now turn 65, I lose my doctor. The reason they lose their doctor is because doctors are dropping out of providing for the Medicare program because they cannot keep up with the costs that are required to keep their offices open, and as a consequence, we gave a very small increase in Medicare provider fees during the Medicare Modernization Act.

If those same patients who now see a slight fee increase in the Medicare part B premium, if the increase had not happened, in all likelihood there would have been fewer and fewer providers for them to actually see.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, some of my colleagues quickly forget that the medical profession was facing another significant cut when we passed the Medicare Modernization Act last December, and how quickly they forget that it was necessary to ensure that seniors have access, timely access, to doctors and other Medicare providers.

The problem is that taking this out of context, the opponents of the Medicare Modernization Act, and there are many, they are only seeking to inflame the passions of people who are perhaps uneasy about their medical care anyway. But, really, what do these changes mean for seniors? What do they represent?

They represent a secured access to a provider network by providing a 2-year 1½ percent reimbursement rate increase. That is a 1½ percent rate increase for providers, not a significant amount when we consider the overall

cost-of-living increases and the fact that medical inflation itself has gone up by 2.5 percent over the past 6 months.

Seniors also get preventive screenings to begin in 2005 for new beneficiaries; and in fact, these screenings will save the patients themselves and the Medicare program at large thousands of dollars.

New diabetes screenings will begin that will save beneficiaries thousands of dollars; and to top it all off, in 2006 a prescription drug benefit does begin that will save seniors money and improve their quality of life.

But I must point out, the rate increase that was announced last week, in no way is the prescription drug benefit responsible for that rate increase. That was purely to cover the 25 percent cost that, by law, our part B premium has to cover of the provider reimbursement.

It is important for us in this body to be honest about the changes in the Medicare Modernization Act and not use instances like the premium increase to scare seniors away from Medicare; and, Mr. Speaker, I will even go a little bit further. It is also important to bear in mind that, once again, we have not done liability reform, which is one of the things that I really looked forward to when we began this session of Congress in January of 2003.

The embedded cost of defensive medicine in our Medicare system, from a Stanford University study done in 1996, so these are 1996 dollars, \$50 billion a year is spent on defensive medicine in this country because of the unfairness of the medical justice system. We have had an opportunity to fix that. In fact, we passed that twice in the House of Representatives with caps on non-economic damages. It still awaits activity over 400 yards on the other side of the Capitol. I would like to think we could get that done this year. It does not seem that it will happen. It is of critical importance that we tackle that and get that done next year.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### STATUS REPORT ON CURRENT SPENDING LEVELS OF ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FY 2004 AND THE 5-YEAR PERIOD FY 2005 THROUGH FY 2009

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I am transmitting a status report on the current levels of on-budget spending and revenues for fiscal year 2005 and for the five-year period of fiscal years 2005

through 2009. This report is necessary to facilitate the application of sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act and section 401 of the conference report on the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2005 (S. Con. Res. 95), which is currently in effect as a concurrent resolution on the budget in the House under H. Res. 649. This status report is current through September 6, 2004.

The term "current level" refers to the amounts of spending and revenues estimated for each fiscal year based on laws enacted or awaiting the President's signature.

The first table in the report compares the current levels of total budget authority, outlays, and revenues with the aggregate levels set forth by S. Con. Res. 95. This comparison is needed to enforce section 311(a) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures that would breach the budget resolution's aggregate levels. The table does not show budget authority and outlays for years after fiscal year 2005 because appropriations for those years have not yet been considered.

The second table compares the current levels of budget authority and outlays for discretionary action by each authorizing committee with the "section 302(a)" allocations made under S. Con. Res. 95 for fiscal year 2005 and fiscal years 2005 through 2009. "Discretionary action" refers to legislation enacted after the adoption of the budget resolution. This comparison is needed to enforce section 302(f) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures that would breach the section 302(a) discretionary action allocation of new budget authority for the committee that reported the measure. It is also needed to implement section 311(b), which exempts committees that comply with their allocations from the point of order under section 311(a).

The third table compares the current levels of discretionary appropriations for fiscal year 2005 with the "section 302(b)" suballocations of discretionary budget authority and outlays among Appropriations subcommittees. The comparison is also needed to enforce section 302(f) of the Budget Act because the point of order under that section equally applies to measures that would breach the applicable section 302(b) suballocation.

The fourth table gives the current level for 2006 of accounts identified for advance appropriations under section 401 of S. Con. Res. 95. This list is needed to enforce section 401 of the budget resolution, which creates a point of order against appropriation bills that contain advance appropriations that are: (i) Not identified in the statement of managers; or (ii) would cause the aggregate amount of such appropriations to exceed the level specified in the resolution.